Knowing how to design and implement online learning is vital to implementing online learning in a school. Online learning or putting a course online is beneficial in many ways. I work in a small school where students are involved in a multitude of extracurricular activities, but the class requirements are not compromised. When speaking with the administrators in my high school, the “anytime, anywhere” access to the class was the most desired benefit of placing a course online. Students who do not attend the class due to extracurricular activities or other reasons can easily access the class requirements from virtually any place and anytime. A technology administrator who has the knowledge and understanding of online education can help other teachers develop online content that will keep the student involved in the class work even when they are unable to attend the traditional classroom. Another huge benefit is helping students develop good self-discipline practices. There are other rationales for developing online learning ranging from improving the quality of learning, to reducing costs, to preparing students better for a knowledge-based society, to collaborative learning across the world.

I personally am excited about the course I designed and the different ways I will be able to apply, develop, and expand it. The unit I developed will be used in all but one of my five classes. I plan to further develop the class to include all units in all classes in all courses. I realize the hard work is ahead. Putting the classes online the first year will be a daunting task, but once completed only minor adjustments and revisions will be required in the following years. I see this as being an excellent way to free up my time as an instructor to be able to give more individual attention to students in need. Another great benefit will be organization. An online course must be organized to be effective. Students need to be able to access any necessary material related to the course through the online course. If properly organized, there is no question about due dates, assignments, and etc.

According to the “Texas Long Range Plan for Technology”, Texas educators are mandated to integrate technology into the curriculum. Even though I feel we are mandated to integrate technology, I will do it because I feel it is the best way to engage the 21st Century learner. As previously mentioned, I plan to integrate more technology into my curriculum. I desire to not just teach technology but to also teach with technology. I plan to model project-based, constructivist learning principles. In the role of technology coordinator, it is vital that the coordinator model technology use with teachers and teacher in return model technology use with students. Sprague et al. (1998) suggested that effective models for the purpose of teaching technology use to faculty should include five components: (a) awareness of the potential technology can offer, (b) opportunity to explore technology integration possibilities, (c) time to master learning the technology, (d) applying the technology to teaching, and (e) reflecting on teaching. This is the outline of the progression of technology use in the classroom.

I do have a few questions or concerns in regard to the implementation of increased technology use in the classroom. What changes will be required in the infrastructure of the current school network to handle the increase in network use? How much bandwidth will be required? What will be the cost of needed upgrades? Possibly the most difficult question to answer will be, How do we sell the current faculty on increased technology use? When testing the unit I built on Schoology, I immediately encountered difficulties with bandwidth issues. I had four of eight students viewing a required online video. The internet began to crawl. If this is an issue for this limited amount of use, I can only imagine the difficulties when 50 or more students are trying to access streaming video. Technology infrastructure in schools has not reached an acceptable measure of reliability in order to accommodate higher demand. Students have accepted technology and has embraced its use. Teachers(Digital Immigrants) on the other hand are slow to accept its use. This is a battle a good technology coordinator can take on and win.

As mentioned before, I am excited about what I have learned in this course. Being able to put my classes online and making them available to my students anytime, anywhere is extremely valuable. I plan to put as many of my classes as possible online for my students. This will enable my students who miss class, for various reasons, to be able to access the class and stay caught up with their work. This will in turn, free up more time for further content exposure. Good organization is key to having a successful online class, not only on the teachers part but the student’s side as well. I will not only incorporate online learning in my classes, but encourage other teachers to do the same. I feel it will be my responsibility to educate other teachers on the mechanics and advantages of online learning. I also learned that Schoology is a better platform than Moodle for developing online classes.

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